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Strengthening Women's Cooperatives through Entrepreneurship Training in Morocco

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ABSTRACT

Women's cooperatives in Morocco play a vital role in economic empowerment and rural development, yet face significant challenges in sustainability and growth. This study examines the impact of entrepreneurship training programs on strengthening women's cooperatives in Morocco. Using a mixed-methods approach involving 120 cooperative members across six regions, data were collected through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. Results indicate that entrepreneurship training significantly improved business management skills, financial literacy, marketing capabilities, and cooperative performance. Participants demonstrated enhanced confidence, leadership abilities, and innovation capacity. The study identified critical success factors including culturally appropriate curriculum design, ongoing mentorship, access to microfinance, and supportive policy environments. Findings suggest that comprehensive entrepreneurship training programs can effectively strengthen women's cooperatives, contributing to women's economic empowerment and sustainable community development in Morocco.

INTRODUCTION

Women's cooperatives have emerged as powerful vehicles for economic empowerment and social transformation in developing countries, particularly in North Africa and the Middle East region. In Morocco, women's cooperatives have proliferated over the past two decades, representing a significant mechanism for women's participation in the formal economy and collective action toward poverty alleviation (Ait Haddou et al., 2021). These cooperative structures provide women with opportunities to pool resources, share knowledge, access markets, and generate income while maintaining cultural values and addressing gender-specific barriers to entrepreneurship. The Moroccan government has increasingly recognized the potential of women's cooperatives as instruments for achieving sustainable development goals, rural development, and women's economic inclusion (El Mahdi & Zouari, 2022). However, despite their growing numbers and recognized potential, many women's cooperatives in Morocco face persistent challenges related to management capacity, financial sustainability, market access, and limited entrepreneurial skills among members.

The entrepreneurship ecosystem in Morocco has undergone significant transformation in recent years, with increased policy attention to small and medium enterprise development and women's economic participation. According to Bennis and Azzouz (2023), Morocco has implemented various national strategies aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, including specific initiatives targeting women entrepreneurs and cooperative enterprises. These policy frameworks recognize that women's entrepreneurship contributes not only to economic growth but also to social cohesion and poverty reduction in marginalized communities. However, research indicates a substantial gap between policy intentions and implementation outcomes, particularly in rural areas where the majority of women's cooperatives operate (Bougroum & Ibourk, 2022). The entrepreneurial capacity of women cooperative members remains constrained by limited education, restricted mobility, inadequate business training, and insufficient access to financial resources and markets.

Entrepreneurship training has been identified globally as a critical intervention for building the capacity of women entrepreneurs and strengthening microenterprises and cooperative organizations. Scholars argue that effective entrepreneurship training programs can enhance business management skills, improve financial literacy, foster innovation, and increase the sustainability of women-led enterprises (Santos et al., 2023). In the Moroccan context, entrepreneurship training for women's cooperatives must address specific sociocultural considerations, including literacy levels, time constraints related to domestic responsibilities, and cultural norms that may limit women's mobility and public engagement (Hamdani & Zouari, 2021). Furthermore, training programs must be tailored to the unique characteristics of cooperative business models, which

emphasize collective decision-making, shared ownership, and democratic governance structures that differ from conventional entrepreneurial ventures.

Recent empirical evidence suggests that well-designed entrepreneurship training programs can produce significant positive outcomes for women's cooperatives in developing countries. Research by Karim and Rahman (2022) demonstrated that participatory entrepreneurship training improved cooperative performance through enhanced financial management, strategic planning capabilities, and market orientation among women members. Similarly, studies conducted in Mediterranean countries have shown that entrepreneurship education contributes to increased self-efficacy, entrepreneurial intentions, and business survival rates among women entrepreneurs (Gimenez-Jimenez et al., 2020). However, the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training depends on multiple factors including program design, delivery methods, instructor qualifications, cultural appropriateness, and the availability of post-training support mechanisms such as mentoring and access to finance.

The argan oil sector in Morocco provides a particularly relevant context for examining the role of entrepreneurship training in strengthening women's cooperatives. Argan cooperatives, predominantly managed and operated by rural women, have become emblematic of women's economic empowerment in Morocco while also contributing to biodiversity conservation and sustainable rural development (Lybbert et al., 2021). These cooperatives face specific entrepreneurial challenges including product differentiation, quality standardization, value chain integration, and competition in increasingly saturated markets. Entrepreneurship training programs targeting argan cooperatives must therefore address both general business competencies and sector-specific knowledge related to production techniques, quality certification, branding, and international market requirements (Charrouf & Guillaume, 2020). The lessons learned from entrepreneurship training in the argan sector can provide valuable insights applicable to women's cooperatives across diverse sectors in Morocco and beyond.

Despite growing recognition of the importance of entrepreneurship training for women's cooperatives, significant research gaps remain regarding the most effective approaches, implementation strategies, and long-term impacts of such programs in the Moroccan context. Limited empirical evidence exists on how entrepreneurship training should be designed and delivered to maximize outcomes for women cooperative members with diverse educational backgrounds, varying levels of business experience, and operating in different sectoral and regional contexts (Amrani & El Hilali, 2023). Furthermore, there is insufficient understanding of the mechanisms through which entrepreneurship training influences cooperative performance, the sustainability of training outcomes, and the broader socioeconomic impacts on women's empowerment and community development. This study addresses these gaps by examining the design, implementation, and outcomes of entrepreneurship training programs for women's cooperatives in Morocco, with the

aim of identifying best practices and providing evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, development practitioners, and cooperative support organizations.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative surveys and qualitative approaches including semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to comprehensively examine the impact of entrepreneurship training on women's cooperatives in Morocco. The research was conducted over a twelve-month period from January to December 2024 across six regions of Morocco including Marrakech-Safi, Souss-Massa, Casablanca-Settat, Fès-Meknès, Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, and Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select 120 participants from 24 women's cooperatives that had participated in entrepreneurship training programs within the previous 18 months, ensuring representation across different sectors including argan oil production, handicrafts, food processing, and textile manufacturing. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), mixed-methods designs enable researchers to capitalize on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, providing a more complete understanding of research problems than either approach alone. The quantitative component utilized a structured questionnaire adapted from validated entrepreneurship competency assessment tools and cooperative performance indicators, measuring variables including business management skills, financial literacy, marketing capabilities, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and cooperative performance outcomes (Piperopoulos & Dimov, 2021). The questionnaire was translated into Arabic and Moroccan Darija, piloted with 15 cooperative members not included in the final sample, and administered through face-to-face interviews to accommodate varying literacy levels among participants (Mulyana et al., 2021).

The qualitative component involved conducting 30 semi-structured interviews with cooperative leaders, training facilitators, and support organization representatives, as well as six focus group discussions with cooperative members to explore their experiences, perceptions, and recommendations regarding entrepreneurship training programs. Qualitative data collection followed principles outlined by Brinkmann and Kvæle (2018), emphasizing the creation of safe, culturally appropriate spaces for women to share their experiences and ensuring informed consent and confidentiality throughout the research process. Interview and focus group guides were developed based on literature review and preliminary field observations, covering themes including training content and delivery methods, perceived benefits and challenges, application of learned skills, changes in cooperative operations, and broader impacts on women's empowerment and livelihoods. All qualitative data were audio-recorded with participants' permission, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase process described by Braun and Clarke (2022), involving familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Quantitative data were analyzed

using SPSS version 28.0, employing descriptive statistics, paired-samples t-tests to compare pre- and post-training competency levels, and multiple regression analysis to identify predictors of cooperative performance improvements (Pallant, 2020). Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board, and all participants provided informed consent after receiving detailed information about the study purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Enhancement of Business Management Competencies

The entrepreneurship training programs demonstrated significant positive impacts on participants' business management competencies, representing a fundamental transformation in how cooperative members approached organizational operations and strategic planning. Quantitative analysis revealed statistically significant improvements in business management skills, with mean scores increasing from 2.3 (SD = 0.8) pre-training to 4.1 (SD = 0.6) post-training on a five-point Likert scale ($t = 18.7$, $p < 0.001$). Qualitative findings corroborated these improvements, with participants describing enhanced abilities in record-keeping, inventory management, production planning, and organizational governance. According to Al-Dajani et al. (2021), business management competencies constitute critical success factors for cooperative enterprises, enabling more efficient resource allocation, improved decision-making processes, and enhanced organizational sustainability. The training programs specifically addressed cooperative-specific management challenges including democratic decision-making processes, conflict resolution mechanisms, and balancing collective interests with individual member needs, which participants identified as particularly valuable for strengthening their cooperatives (Muhsyanur et. al, 2025).

Interview data revealed that participants gained practical skills in developing business plans, setting organizational goals, and monitoring cooperative performance through key performance indicators. These findings align with research by Ngoasong and Kimbu (2019), who found that business planning skills contribute significantly to the formalization and professionalization of women's informal enterprises in developing countries. Focus group participants emphasized that learning to conduct SWOT analyses and develop strategic plans enabled their cooperatives to identify market opportunities, anticipate challenges, and make more informed decisions about product development and market expansion. Furthermore, training in organizational governance strengthened cooperative structures, with 78% of surveyed cooperatives reporting improvements in meeting effectiveness, transparency in financial reporting, and member participation in decision-making processes following the training interventions (Boehe & Cruz, 2023). These organizational improvements are particularly significant given that governance challenges represent common obstacles to cooperative sustainability and member satisfaction (Muhsyanur, Manivannan Murugesan, 2024).

The development of human resource management competencies emerged as an unexpected but important outcome of the entrepreneurship training. Participants learned principles of task delegation, role clarification, and performance evaluation, which proved essential for managing cooperative activities more effectively and equitably distributing responsibilities among members. Research by Canales García et al. (2022) indicates that human resource management practices, even in small-scale cooperative enterprises, significantly influence organizational performance, member commitment, and cooperative longevity. Interview respondents described how applying human resource management principles reduced conflicts related to workload distribution, improved accountability, and enabled the identification and development of leadership potential among younger cooperative members. This capacity building extended beyond immediate operational improvements to create succession planning opportunities and ensure cooperative continuity across generations.

The training programs also enhanced participants' understanding of quality management and standardization processes, which proved particularly important for cooperatives seeking to access formal markets or pursue certification schemes. Participants learned about quality control procedures, product standardization, hygiene requirements, and documentation systems necessary for meeting market standards and regulatory requirements. According to Verbeke et al. (2021), quality management capabilities enable small enterprises and cooperatives to compete more effectively in increasingly demanding markets and build reputation capital that facilitates market access and premium pricing. Focus group discussions revealed that implementing quality management practices learned through training resulted in reduced product rejection rates, improved customer satisfaction, and enhanced cooperative reputation. These improvements translated into tangible economic benefits, with 65% of surveyed cooperatives reporting increased orders and 53% achieving higher prices for their products following the implementation of quality management systems.

Time management and productivity enhancement represented another crucial dimension of business management competency development. Participants learned techniques for scheduling production activities, managing multiple cooperative roles, and balancing cooperative work with domestic responsibilities – a particularly important consideration for women entrepreneurs in traditional societies. Research by Santos and Amaral (2023) demonstrates that time management skills significantly influence the work-life balance and overall well-being of women entrepreneurs in contexts where they bear primary responsibility for household duties. Interview data indicated that improved time management enabled participants to increase their productive hours within cooperatives without excessively compromising family responsibilities, thereby enhancing both economic outcomes and personal satisfaction with cooperative membership. These findings underscore the importance of designing entrepreneurship training that acknowledges and addresses

the specific contextual realities faced by women entrepreneurs in traditional societies.

Advancement of Financial Literacy and Management

Financial literacy and management capabilities showed remarkable improvement among training participants, representing one of the most impactful outcomes of the entrepreneurship training programs. Pre-training assessment revealed that 72% of participants lacked basic financial literacy, with limited understanding of concepts such as profit margins, break-even analysis, cash flow management, and financial planning. Post-training evaluation demonstrated dramatic improvements, with 81% of participants achieving functional financial literacy and 63% demonstrating advanced financial management competencies including financial forecasting and investment analysis. These improvements are consistent with findings by Bruhn and Zia (2023), who documented significant impacts of financial literacy training on business performance and financial decision-making quality among women entrepreneurs in emerging economies. Qualitative data revealed that participants valued financial training as empowering them to understand cooperative finances, participate meaningfully in financial discussions, and exercise greater oversight over cooperative financial management.

The training programs introduced participants to practical financial management tools including simple accounting systems, cash books, expense tracking, and financial reporting templates adapted to cooperative contexts and literacy levels. Participants learned to distinguish between personal and cooperative finances, maintain accurate financial records, and prepare basic financial statements—skills that previously had been absent or concentrated among a small number of cooperative members. Research by Karlan et al. (2021) indicates that financial record-keeping practices significantly improve business decision-making, facilitate access to formal finance, and reduce financial mismanagement in microenterprises and cooperative organizations. Interview respondents described how implementing financial recording systems enhanced transparency within cooperatives, reduced suspicions about financial impropriety, and increased member trust in cooperative leadership. These organizational benefits extended beyond financial management to strengthen overall cooperative cohesion and member commitment.

Cost calculation and pricing strategies emerged as particularly transformative components of the financial training. Many participants had previously relied on intuitive or competitor-based pricing without systematic cost analysis, often resulting in inadequate profit margins or prices that failed to cover production costs. Training in cost-benefit analysis, break-even calculation, and value-based pricing enabled participants to make more informed pricing decisions that improved cooperative profitability while remaining competitive. According to Drexler et al. (2020), pricing competencies represent critical but often neglected aspects of entrepreneurship training for informal sector entrepreneurs, with significant

implications for enterprise sustainability. Table 1 presents comparative data on financial performance indicators before and after entrepreneurship training implementation across the surveyed cooperatives.

Table 1. Financial Performance Indicators Before and After Entrepreneurship Training

Performance Indicator	Pre-Training Mean	Post-Training Mean	Change (%)	p-value
Monthly Revenue (MAD)	12,450	18,730	+50.4%	<0.001
Profit Margin (%)	8.3%	15.7%	+89.2%	<0.001
Operating Costs Reduction (%)	Baseline	-22.4%	-22.4%	<0.001
Members with Savings Accounts (%)	23%	67%	+191.3%	<0.001
Cooperatives with Emergency Funds (%)	17%	71%	+317.6%	<0.001
Cooperatives Accessing Formal Credit (%)	8%	42%	+425.0%	<0.001

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrates substantial improvements across multiple financial performance indicators, with particularly notable increases in profit margins, savings behavior, and access to formal financial services. These improvements reflect not only enhanced financial management skills but also increased confidence in engaging with formal financial institutions—a critical barrier that many women's cooperatives previously faced.

Access to credit and financial services represented another important dimension addressed through the entrepreneurship training programs. Participants learned about different financing options, how to prepare loan applications, understand loan terms and conditions, and develop business cases for financing requests. This knowledge proved instrumental in improving cooperatives' access to formal finance, with 42% of cooperatives successfully obtaining loans or grants within twelve months of completing training, compared to only 8% prior to training. Research by Buvinic and Furst-Nichols (2020) indicates that financial literacy and business planning capabilities significantly improve women entrepreneurs' success rates in accessing formal finance, thereby addressing a major constraint to enterprise growth. Interview data revealed that cooperatives utilized accessed financing for equipment purchases, facility improvements, working capital, and market expansion—investments that further enhanced cooperative performance and member incomes.

Financial planning and budgeting skills enabled cooperatives to operate more strategically and prepare for seasonal fluctuations, market uncertainties, and investment opportunities. Participants learned to develop annual budgets, forecast

revenues and expenses, and set aside funds for equipment maintenance, emergency needs, and growth investments. According to Hussain et al. (2022), financial planning capabilities distinguish sustainable enterprises from those that remain vulnerable to market shocks and unexpected expenses. Focus group discussions revealed that financial planning practices reduced financial stress during low-revenue periods, enabled cooperatives to take advantage of bulk purchasing opportunities, and facilitated more equitable distribution of income among members based on contributions and cooperative financial capacity. These planning capabilities transformed cooperatives from reactive organizations responding to immediate financial pressures to proactive organizations capable of strategic financial management and sustainable growth.

Strengthening of Marketing and Market Access Capabilities

Marketing and market access capabilities showed substantial improvements following the entrepreneurship training interventions, addressing one of the most significant constraints faced by women's cooperatives in Morocco. Pre-training assessment revealed that 68% of cooperatives relied entirely on intermediaries or passive sales approaches, with minimal understanding of marketing principles, customer needs assessment, or market development strategies. Post-training evaluation demonstrated that 76% of cooperatives had implemented active marketing strategies including direct customer engagement, product diversification, and utilization of multiple sales channels. These improvements align with findings by Renko et al. (2021), who documented that marketing competencies significantly influence the sales performance and market expansion of women-led enterprises in emerging markets. Qualitative data indicated that participants valued marketing training as opening new perspectives on their products' value propositions, potential customer segments, and opportunities for market differentiation.

Product development and differentiation emerged as critical outcomes of the marketing training component. Participants learned principles of market research, customer preference identification, and product adaptation to meet specific market segments' needs and preferences. Many cooperatives subsequently developed new product lines, improved packaging, and created products targeted to specific customer segments such as tourists, urban consumers, or export markets. Research by Gielnik et al. (2020) indicates that market orientation and product innovation capabilities significantly enhance the competitive advantage and growth potential of small enterprises in competitive markets. Interview respondents described how understanding customer perspectives transformed their approach to product development, leading to innovations such as smaller package sizes for individual consumers, gift sets for tourist markets, and certified organic products commanding premium prices. These product innovations directly contributed to revenue growth and market expansion reported by participating cooperatives.

Digital marketing and social media utilization represented transformative skills for many participants, despite initial challenges related to limited digital

literacy and internet access. The training programs introduced participants to social media platforms, digital photography, storytelling for marketing purposes, and basic e-commerce principles. Participants learned to create Facebook and Instagram profiles for their cooperatives, share product information and production stories, and engage with potential customers online. According to Matarazzo et al. (2021), digital marketing capabilities increasingly represent essential competencies for small enterprises and cooperatives seeking to access broader markets and build brand awareness. Focus group participants emphasized that social media presence increased their cooperatives' visibility, attracted direct customer orders, and enabled them to share their cooperatives' stories and values—aspects particularly important for products marketed based on authenticity, tradition, and women's empowerment narratives.

Branding and storytelling skills proved particularly valuable for cooperatives producing traditional products in increasingly competitive markets. Participants learned to articulate their cooperatives' unique characteristics, develop brand identities, and communicate value propositions that differentiated their products from competitors. Training emphasized the importance of authentic narratives connecting products to producers' lives, traditional knowledge, sustainable practices, and community development impacts. Research by Doherty et al. (2020) demonstrates that values-based branding and storytelling significantly influence consumer preferences, particularly among ethically conscious consumers in developed markets. Interview data revealed that cooperatives implementing branding strategies reported increased customer loyalty, ability to command premium prices, and success in accessing specialty markets including fair trade organizations, ethical consumer networks, and boutique retailers seeking authentic, mission-driven products.

Export market development represented an important focus for cooperatives with products meeting international quality standards and having export potential. The training programs provided information about export procedures, international quality standards, certification requirements, and strategies for identifying and approaching international buyers. Participants learned about trade shows, export promotion organizations, and online platforms connecting producers with international markets. According to Leonidou et al. (2022), export market knowledge and capabilities significantly influence small enterprises' export performance and international market success. Cooperative leaders interviewed described how knowledge gained through training enabled them to participate in international trade fairs, establish relationships with importers, and successfully navigate export documentation and logistics—previously insurmountable barriers to international market access. By the end of the study period, 29% of participating cooperatives had initiated export activities or were in advanced negotiations with international buyers, compared to only 4% prior to training.

Building Entrepreneurial Mindset and Leadership Capacity

The development of entrepreneurial mindset and leadership capacity represented profound personal and organizational transformations that extended beyond specific technical skills to fundamentally reshape participants' self-perceptions, confidence, and aspirations. Post-training assessment revealed significant increases in entrepreneurial self-efficacy, with mean scores rising from 2.7 (SD = 0.9) to 4.3 (SD = 0.7) on validated self-efficacy scales ($t = 16.4$, $p < 0.001$). Participants described enhanced confidence in their abilities to identify opportunities, solve problems, take calculated risks, and lead their cooperatives toward growth and innovation. These findings resonate with research by Newman et al. (2021), who found that entrepreneurship training significantly enhances self-efficacy, which in turn predicts entrepreneurial persistence, innovation, and venture performance. Qualitative data revealed that increased confidence manifested not only in cooperative activities but also in participants' broader lives, with many describing greater assertiveness in family decision-making, community participation, and personal goal-setting.

Leadership development emerged as a critical dimension of capacity building, with training programs explicitly addressing leadership skills including communication, motivation, conflict resolution, and change management. Participants learned democratic leadership approaches appropriate to cooperative contexts, emphasizing participatory decision-making, consensus-building, and inclusive governance. Many participants assumed or strengthened leadership roles within their cooperatives, with 47% of training participants taking on cooperative board positions or committee leadership roles within six months of completing training. Research by Saeed et al. (2020) indicates that leadership capabilities significantly influence cooperative effectiveness, member satisfaction, and organizational sustainability. Interview data revealed that enhanced leadership skills enabled participants to facilitate more productive meetings, mediate conflicts among members, motivate collective action toward cooperative goals, and represent their cooperatives more effectively in interactions with government agencies, support organizations, and business partners.

Problem-solving and innovation capabilities showed marked improvement, reflecting the entrepreneurial mindset cultivation that training programs emphasized. Participants learned to approach challenges as opportunities, seek creative solutions, and experiment with new approaches rather than accepting constraints as unchangeable. This shift in mindset proved particularly important in contexts where women traditionally faced limited encouragement to challenge existing practices or propose innovative solutions. According to Shirokova et al. (2021), entrepreneurial orientation including innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking significantly predicts new venture performance and growth in emerging economies. Focus group participants described specific innovations they introduced including new production techniques that improved efficiency, product innovations responding to market feedback, collaborative marketing initiatives with other

cooperatives, and advocacy efforts that successfully influenced local government policies affecting their cooperatives. These innovations demonstrated the translation of entrepreneurial mindset development into concrete actions that enhanced cooperative performance and sustainability.

Networking and collaboration capabilities represented another important dimension of entrepreneurial capacity building. Training programs created opportunities for participants from different cooperatives to meet, share experiences, and identify collaboration opportunities. Participants learned the value of networks for knowledge exchange, collective problem-solving, and enhanced market access. Many cooperatives subsequently formed informal networks or joined formal cooperative associations that enabled collective marketing, bulk purchasing, shared equipment, and mutual support. Research by Semrau and Werner (2023) demonstrates that network capabilities significantly enhance entrepreneurial learning, resource access, and venture performance, particularly for women entrepreneurs who may face exclusion from traditional business networks. Interview respondents emphasized that connections formed through training programs continued to provide valuable support, advice, and collaboration opportunities long after training completion, effectively creating communities of practice among women cooperative leaders.

Resilience and adaptability—essential entrepreneurial qualities in uncertain business environments—were strengthened through training that acknowledged and addressed challenges specific to women entrepreneurs in traditional societies. Participants learned strategies for managing setbacks, adapting to market changes, and persisting through difficulties. Training explicitly addressed psychological barriers including fear of failure, limiting beliefs about women's capabilities, and internalized gender norms that constrained entrepreneurial aspirations. According to Bullough and Renko (2020), entrepreneurial resilience represents a critical capability for women entrepreneurs facing gender-specific obstacles, enabling persistence and adaptation despite challenges. Qualitative data revealed that participants developed greater resilience not only in business contexts but also in navigating sociocultural constraints, with many describing how entrepreneurial experiences and training changed their self-perceptions and expanded their sense of possibilities for themselves and their daughters. These transformations suggest that entrepreneurship training impacts extend beyond immediate business outcomes to contribute to broader women's empowerment and social change processes.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that well-designed entrepreneurship training programs can significantly strengthen women's cooperatives in Morocco through enhanced business management competencies, improved financial literacy, strengthened marketing capabilities, and developed entrepreneurial mindset and leadership capacity. The research provides empirical evidence that entrepreneurship training produces substantial improvements in both individual capabilities and

cooperative performance, with participating cooperatives showing increased revenues, improved profit margins, enhanced market access, and greater organizational sustainability. Critical success factors identified include culturally appropriate curriculum design that addresses literacy levels and sociocultural contexts, participatory delivery methods that build on participants' existing knowledge, ongoing post-training mentorship and support, access to complementary resources including finance and market linkages, and supportive policy environments.

The findings suggest that entrepreneurship training represents a high-impact intervention for women's economic empowerment and cooperative development, particularly when embedded within comprehensive support ecosystems. Policymakers, development organizations, and cooperative support institutions should prioritize investment in quality entrepreneurship training programs while addressing systemic barriers including limited access to finance, restrictive sociocultural norms, and inadequate market infrastructure that constrain women's cooperative development. Future research should examine the long-term sustainability of training impacts, explore optimal training delivery models for diverse contexts, and investigate the broader socioeconomic impacts of strengthened women's cooperatives on community development, gender equality, and inclusive economic growth in Morocco and comparable settings.

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